

Motherly Trust by OTTSTF

Series: [Of Hoppers and Wheelers \[1\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Explicit Language, F/M, Family, Just two words though

Language: English

Characters: Eleven | Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Karen Wheeler, Mike Wheeler, Ted Wheeler

Relationships: Eleven | Jane Hopper/Mike Wheeler

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-04-08

Updated: 2018-04-08

Packaged: 2022-04-21 15:36:12

Rating: Teen And Up Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 2,792

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

El wants to meet the Wheelers.

She wants Mike to be able to stop lying to them about her.

Can they be trusted?

She hopes so.

Another attempt at an El-meets-the-Wheeler-parents story.

Motherly Trust

Author's Note:

Inspired by [JoMo3's Confessions](#).

I *might* have fallen asleep with my laptop whilst writing this one.

“Dad?”

Hopper looks up from his papers to where El is sat on the sofa from the dining table.

“Yeah, kid?”

“Could I... meet Mike’s parents?”

The mentioning of the Wheeler kid never fails to make him roll his eyes, but here, his eyebrows raise, both in curiosity, and slight panic.

“Why do you want to meet them?”

“I’ll have to, some time.” she says bluntly. “I don’t want Mike to lie to his mama any more.”

“To not lie?” he questions. “El, how much do you want her to know?”

“I want to meet her.” she says. “If Mike can trust her... I want her to know everything.”

Now Hopper is definitely panicking. “Kid, are you serious?”

“Only if he wants to trust her.” she reminds him. “I just... want to be clear with her.” she considers how to explain her reasoning. “I’d rather tell her now than let her find out another way.”

Hopper considers that. Weighing the pros and cons, he supposes that El’s point is a good one; they’d likely be on much better terms with the woman if they open up to her right now.

On the other hand, she could lose her mind, and rat El out to *them* .

Hopefully, the woman can see which option would be better for her.

“Michael better know what he’s doing.” Hopper says as his answer.

El jumps off the sofa, running over to the man. “Thank you!” she shouts, pulling him into a hug.

“Can I go now?”

“Now? Kid, does Mike even know about this?”

She bits her lip for a moment. “I... wanted it to be a surprise for him.”

He groans. “Could’ve told me that first, kid.”

“Please?”

Sighing, he nods. “You’ve got ten minutes. Go get ready, I’ll drop you off.”

She practically sprints into her room immediately. *This is going to be fun*, Hopper thinks to himself.

Hopper rings the doorbell, as he stands at El’s side behind the door. From inside, they hear Karen’s voice ring out.

“Michael! Can you get the door?”

“Yeah, I’m on it!” he calls back; the sound of his voice putting an excited smile onto El’s face immediately.

A few seconds later, he’s staring at El in disbelief. “El?”

“Hello, Mike.” she says, the smile growing as she looks into this house for the first time since... *before*.

“What’re you doing here?” Mike glances between her and Hopper.

"This is on you, kid." Hopper tells Mike. "She wants to meet your folks, I'm just gonna hang around."

"You... you wanna meet... my parents?" he asks for her confirmation, receiving it via a head nod.

"Who is it?" Karen's voice finally rings from behind Mike.
"Chief Hopper? And... who's this?"

Mike gulps in preparation.

"This... this is Jane." he starts off. "My... uh, girlfriend."
He still can't believe *he* gets to say that, *about her*.

"Your *girlfriend*?" Ted butts in from the La-Z Boy. "Did I hear that right, son?"

"Y-Yeah." Mike responds.

"Why have you never mentioned her to us before?" Karen asks. "And why is she with the chief?"

"Well... she's been shy." he quickly works up an excuse. "And she... she's his daughter."

"Chief? I thought..."

Hopper nods his head, knowing exactly what Karen's referring to.
"I'll let them do the explaining." he says simply.

Mike looks to Hopper in confusion, wondering why he's not just rolling with the cover story they'd made himself. El notices this, so she leans in to whisper to Mike.

"I want to tell them the truth." she whispers to him.

Mike's eyes shoot wide open as he looks at El in disbelief. 'What?' he mouths wordlessly.

'Please.' she mouths back.

Mike glances back to his mother, still watching the two of them. Karen sees the fear in Mike's face immediately.

“What is going on?” she demands.

Mike looks back to El, the fear in his face clear as day. El takes both his hands in both of hers, looking him in the eye.

“I don’t want you to lie to them any more, Mike.” she says, purposely loud enough for Karen to hear.

“Excuse me?” Karen immediately follows with. “Lying to us? About what? Michael?”

Mike sighs, knowing that there’s no way out of this now. He respects El’s wishes, anyway, and seeing as Hopper brought her here, and is letting this happen, Mike guesses the man’s come to accept it as well.

And so, Mike turns to his mother once again.

“We... should sit down for this. It’s going to take a while.”

The sight of his father also approaching them to join the conversation makes it seem a whole lot more dreadful for Mike and Hopper alike. They’re sure, or at least they’d like to believe, that Karen could come to terms with things, and accept things for what they are. Ted, on the other hand, looks to the government as if they make the sun rise every day. He’ll be a lot harder to deal with.

“Okay, so first thing’s first: *What* have you been lying to us about?” Karen asks.

Mike gulps, already dreading this conversation.

“Some of my visits to Will...” he starts off with.

“Right...” Karen says, already putting two and two together. So *some* of these visits have been to... *Jane*... instead?”

“Yes.” he validates her theory. “A lot of them, really. Like, over half.”

Karen nods her head. “Okay... why have you kept this from us, Mike?”

He sighs. “Well... it’s the way we met, really. She’s... supposed to be

in hiding.”

“Hiding? From what?” she questions.

Mike glances over to his father, gulping again as he prepares himself to answer that question:

“The... the government.”

“Excuse me?” Ted’s eyebrows raise, as do Karen’s. “What’s a child doing running from the government?”

Mike couldn’t prepare himself for the shitstorm that’s about to go down if he’d waited a month to do so. There’s no easy way around this, so he takes things right to the start.

“You remember those people that came looking for a girl, with a shaved head?”

They both nod their head, sure of where this is about to go.

“Well...” Mike gulps, *once again*. “Now you get to meet her.”

“Oh my god, Michael.” Karen says, fear building inside her.

“So you were hiding her in our basement.” Ted deduces.

“Yes.” Mike confirms.

“Why... how...” his mother’s visibly panicked, so Mike grabs her hand.

“Mom, she was alone, in the woods, in the pouring rain. I couldn’t leave her there, she would’ve frozen to death! I had to bring her home. No question about it.”

“Why the hell did you not tell us about her, Michael?” Ted asks.

“I... I was going to. El-” he notices his slip up too late, so with a sigh, he continues.

“*El* told us it was too dangerous. If you’d called *anyone* about her, *they* would’ve heard. They would’ve come, got her, and probably kill us all.”

“Kill us? Michael, why wou-”

"They kept her locked up for twelve years, dad!" Mike cuts his father off. "From birth, to the day I found her. She was their lab rat, and they would do anything to get her back."

"Lab rat?" Karen questions, before turning to El.

"Jane... *El*... whatever it is, why would they do that?"

El glances to Mike, as if asking permission to explain the lab's reasoning. Mike understands her silent question immediately. He takes her hand in his, hoping to comfort her as she does so.

"Only if you want to." he tells her. "I can explain it myself if you want."

She shakes her head. "No... I'll... I'll show them."

He squeezes her hand slightly, anxious as to what their reaction is going to be.

"Okay." he accepts.

She lifts her right arm, displaying her label to Mike's parents.

"What..."

"That's who she is to them." Mike tells them. "Just a number. Eleven."

"Oh my god..." Karen utters in disbelief.

"And..."

"Here." Mike passes an empty plastic cup to El; his parents' eyes following it as he does. "Use this."

She nods her head, glancing up to Mike's parents before finally revealing her secret.

"Please, don't freak out." Mike says to them as he holds El's hand tight, trying to fight off his own worry.

The faces of both Karen and Ted change from furrowed confusion to wide shock in a matter of milliseconds as they observe the plastic cup levitate into the air by itself.

“What the fuck...” Karen allows to slip.

“Holy mother of God.” Ted mumbles at the same time.

“El... you...” Karen has no idea how to explain what she’s seeing.
“How?”

El lowers the cup back to the table gently. “I don’t know.” she admits. “Mama... she worked for... *them*. Didn’t know she was pregnant with me. She was weak, but they took me from birth and forced me to train, every day.”

“Oh my god, El...” Karen’s face drops to sorrow as she hears El’s explanation. Yes, she just watched the girl hold a cup in the air without a single finger on it, but she’s still very capable of putting human quality of life first.

“I’m so sorry.” she tells the girl.

El simply shrugs.

“Your mother...” Ted begins. “Was that MKUltra?” he directs the question more to Hopper, in the hope to get a proper explanation.

“Yes.” Hopper responds. “Like she said, her mother had no idea she was pregnant when she joined, but whatever they did to *her* obviously preserved down the line.”

Ted slowly takes in the information, thinking back to what the people who searched for her had told them.

“I’m sorry Chief, Michael, but I still think we should tell th-”

Hopper has never stood from his chair faster in his life.

“You even finish that sentence, and you will regret it for the rest of your life.”

Ted looks up at the man, eyes widened.

“Excuse me?”

“Let me tell you something. I’m her father. As a way of giving her a chance at a normal life, I’ve been listed as her father. As far as I’m concerned, she absolutely *is* my daughter. If you even *think* about

trying to ruin that for her, I will end you faster than you could blink. Do you understand?"

"I'm sorry, chief." Ted hesitates. "But they told us full well that she is dangerous, and would get us killed."

"And you fucking believe them?" Hopper snaps even further. "You've just heard that they'd kept her locked up for the first twelve years of her life, torturing her into doing what they want, and you want to believe them?"

Ted doesn't respond, not sure of what to say, or what to even think.

"I can't believe you, Ted." Karen declares her side. "How could you even think of doing that? She's a child!"

"I just want to protect my family, Karen!"

"Well do as we say for once!" Mike finally speaks up, surprising himself with how long he'd managed to wait. Ted's face of shock does nothing to deter him.

"She's saved my life from those assholes *twice*. First, they tried to run us all over with a van. Second was at the school that day. They damn well would've shot me, Lucas and Dustin right there if it weren't for El."

Karen and Ted glance to each-other, the former still disgusted by the man's original intentions.

"Is this true?" she asks.

"Yes." El responds. "They tried to take me back. They knew Mike was hiding me. The bad lady was about to shoot him, but..."

She hesitates, not wanting to tell them her actions, which may only further panic Ted.

"She killed them instead." Mike does it for her.

"She... she killed them." Ted repeats.

"Yes. She did. To save me. And Lucas and Dustin."

Silence lingers for a moment, which Mike takes as his cue to

continue.

"We'd all be dead if it weren't for El. That's the truth whether you like it or not." he says to his father.

Ted visibly tries to come to terms with what he's been told. The '*people's government*' that he'd been praising all this time; would they really lock up a child for her entire life to experiment on her? Would they really kill his own son, and his friends, just to re-capture this single girl?

Well. The chief of police seems to know this story. Michael seems adamant for us all to believe the three of them. *And*, how else could he explain the floating cup from earlier?

"I'm sorry." begins with.

"I just... I've always thought we could trust our government, but..."

"It's okay." El responds, quick to forgive. "You want to protect your family." she reminds him.

"Yes. Yes I do." he agrees.

"So do I." she informs him. "I am dangerous; to anyone that threaten us."

That puts a smile on *everyone's* face.

"Oh, El, you don't need to-"

"Yes, I do." she cuts Karen off, despite Hopper's talk of 'manners'.

"Mike saved my life. He was the first person to care about me without any questions. He was the first to give me a home."

Mike's smile grows with each point. Such a simple gesture, it seemed to him.

"I wouldn't be here if Mike didn't find me. Mike wouldn't be here without you."

"I love Mike, so I love you."

Oops. Now Karen's tearing up.

The woman makes her way over to El, wrapping her into a hug.

“Oh, El.” she places a kiss onto her head. “I can see why Michael loves you.”

Both she and Mike blush slightly at that.

“You’re such a lovely girl.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Wheeler.” she responds, blushing a bit more with one of the happiest smiles she’s ever worn.

“Oh, please, call me Karen.” she informs her. El just nods.

“Chief, I’m sorry.” Ted tells Hopper. “I know I’ve never really been the best father, but if you ever need anything; a place for her to stay, a little hand here or there, give me a shout.”

This was the last thing Hopper had expected to hear, from Ted Wheeler of all people.

“Thank you, Ted.” he hides his surprise.

“Don’t mention it, Chief.”

“Thank you for choosing to meet us.” Karen says to El.

“Thank you for understanding me.” she responds.

“I was worried you’d... want me to stay away from Mike.”

“What?” she blurts in disbelief. “God no, El. None of what you’ve been through is your fault.”

“Michael doesn’t know this, but I heard some of his calls. Now I know they were to you.”

“He was so... *broken*, while you were missing. I didn’t know what to do; I just hoped he’d recover eventually, but he didn’t, not until November, which I guess is when you two first saw each-other again.”

“Yes.” El confirms, smiling as she remembers their reunion.

“I know you mean *everything* to Michael. He would’ve done literally *anything* to find you again. I wanted so much to help, but I knew there was nothing I could do.”

"You're helping now." Mike tells her. "I couldn't be happier right now."

"Oh, I know exactly how to make you happier." she tells him. His eyebrows raise in curiosity.

"El, Chief, would you like to stay for dinner?"

El's eyes shoot wide in excitement, her head jumping to see her father's response.

"Oh, I would love to, but I need to get into work soon." he responds.

"Thanks for the offer. I'm sure *somebody* would definitely love that, though."

Karen laughs at that, seeing El's face return to her.

"I'm sure she would."

"Mom, thank you so much!" Mike hugs her tight.

"See? Told you so." she smirks.

"Thank you for letting us meet her, Cheif." Karen says to Hopper before he leaves.

"Thank *you* for having her, Karen." he responds. "When would you like me to collect her?"

"Oh, that's up to you. She'll never be thrown out of this house, as far as I'm concerned."

Hopper smiles at that.

"Alright, nine-thirty good with you?"

"Absolutely." she responds. "I'll see you then."

“You shall. Thanks again.”

And with that, he makes his way to his truck, ready to get on with the day, knowing that the knowledge of El being with the Wheelers will make today much easier than the rest.

Karen turns to observe the two at the dining table – she and Ted agreeing to have their dinner later. She smiles, watching Michael and El destroy their plates with the hugest smiles she’s ever seen her son wear.

She’ll do anything to see that smile every day.
She’s sure that, now, she may see it emerge more often.

She finds herself smiling just the same.

Welcome home, El.

Author's Note:

I hope you enjoyed! If you did, please drop a kudo, and if you have time, a comment. Every '(1)' next to my inbox puts the dumbest smile on my face.
Feedback is a writer's drug. It's our fuel, our inspiration, our encouragement. It means everything to us, good or bad.

Thank you so much! ♥